

**Commissioner Deborah A. Gist's Weekly Field Memo**  
**Friday, February 3, 2012**

**Notes from Commissioner Gist:**

1. Districts urged to register for conference on [Innovation Powered by Technology](#)
2. [Governor's budget](#) supports education initiatives
3. Rhode Island is making progress on teaching policies, [evaluations](#)

**From the R.I. Department of Education (RIDE):**

4. RIDE to release October [2011 NECAP results](#), graduation rates on Thursday (February 9)
5. RIDE accepting [Consolidated Resource Plan](#) amendments through February 24
6. [Perkins funds](#) may increase this year
7. Webinar scheduled for Wednesday on [interpreting NECAP](#) results
8. *Reminder:* Teacher [survey on educator evaluations](#) is on line
9. RIDE, NEARI, RIFTHP co-hosted a [webinar for teachers](#) on educator evaluation
10. *Reminder:* Module 3 and Module 4 [trainings for evaluators](#) to begin next month
11. RIDE seeks LEA responses to survey on [Instructional Management System](#) – **Action Item**
12. RIDE to offer workshops on [mathematics interventions](#) and progress plans

**Attachments to this field memo:**

Amendment Guidance for 2011-2012

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**Action Item Calendar**

**Today** (February 3): Registration deadline for conference on [Innovation Powered by Technology](#)

**Extended deadline: Wednesday** (February 8): [Green Ribbon Schools](#) nomination deadline

February 15: Distribute to teachers link to [evaluation survey](#)

February 17: Response due on IMS Survey (see below)

June 30: Schools and districts submit [final personnel assignments](#)

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***Notes from Commissioner Gist:***

**1. Districts urged to register for conference on Innovation Powered by Technology**

All of us at RIDE are enthusiastic about the possibilities that technology offers for improving instruction and advancing student achievement, and we now have a great opportunity to move forward with these innovations. Our conference on Innovation Powered by Technology will further our statewide conversation on this exciting initiative.

So far, about 25 districts have signed up for the conference, and more than 200 people have registered. Thanks for this great response! I hope that you have selected a team from your LEA to participate in this conference. **Today** (February 3) is the registration deadline, and the conference nearly fully booked. We will do our best to accommodate every district, but if you have not signed up yet please do so as soon as possible. (In fact, if you know of anyone who has registered but has changed plans, please let us know so that we can give that spot to someone else.)

The conference is scheduled for Saturday, February 11, from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., at Rhode Island College. We are fortunate that some of the national leaders on technology and education will join us as well to share their knowledge and expertise. The national speakers include:

- Anthony Kim, founder and CEO of Education Elements;
- Michael Horn, co-author of *Disrupting Class*;
- Jeff Mao, Learning Technology Director at the Maine Department of Education;
- Allison Powell, of the International Association for K-12 Online Learning;
- Tom Vander Ark, founder of GettingSmart.com; and
- Bob Wise, president of the Alliance for Excellent Education and the former Governor of West Virginia

At the conference, we will discuss the competitive grant we are offering for a district proposal to transform a school through technology. If you miss the conference, you can still apply for the grant – but I know that you will find the conference to be very useful as you prepare your grant application.

We have posted registration information here:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/OMP/VL/TechOps/1to1/2012conference.aspx>

I hope to see you there next week!

**2. Governor's budget supports education initiatives**

I hope you had the chance to hear Governor Chafee's State of the State Address on Tuesday. I was very pleased to hear him say that, even in these most difficult economic times, he will "fight to ensure that our students do not go without the resources they need for a quality education."

The Governor's budget for the next fiscal year backs up that commitment, providing support for education initiatives as well as much-needed help for municipalities.

The Governor has asked for a \$69-million increase in funds for education, including \$36 million to fully fund Year 2 of the funding formula and even to accelerate payments for the underfunded communities.

Governor Chafee's budget will provide:

- \$3 million for career-and-technical education;
- \$500,000 for instances of high-cost special education;
- \$1.4 million to continue and expand our Prekindergarten Program; and
- \$1.1 million for out-of-district transportation costs.

The Governor has also called for a \$20-million technology bond, which would fund infrastructure investments our schools will need to prepare for digital learning and for the online assessments coming in 2014.

I will be advocating on behalf of the Governor's budget, which recognizes the progress we have made and the need to keep moving forward with this momentum. On Wednesday, in a Field Memo Alert, I sent you budget breakdowns showing our projections of how the Governor's budget would affect each LEA. If you have any questions about the budget, please contact me or contact Kristen Cole, in our Office of Finance, at [Kristen.cole@ride.ri.gov](mailto:Kristen.cole@ride.ri.gov).

### **3. Rhode Island is making progress on teaching policies, evaluations**

I am truly pleased with the progress we are making in Rhode Island as we work together to implement evaluation systems in every school in our state. This year of gradual implementation is a historic moment for Rhode Island, and we are being recognized nationally for the leading-edge work we are doing with evaluations that will provide all educators with feedback and guidance to improve teaching and learning. As you may know, last month the National Council on Teacher Quality ranked Rhode Island 2<sup>nd</sup> in the country on the qualities of our policies on the teaching profession. We can all be proud of the tremendous progress we are making toward ensuring educator excellence across Rhode Island!

In a meeting with your executive board yesterday, a few questions came up regarding the implementation of the evaluation system, and I want to share with you some of our conversation to help clarify some points on the growth model and on evaluations of support staff.

Our work around the growth model is going well. In preparation for including growth as part of evaluation in 2013-14, we are collecting and reviewing the teacher-course student link data. This week, we reviewed the first trial data summaries for looking at student growth. The data look

good, and our Technical Advisory Committee will weigh in with us next week with teachers. We are on course toward using growth as part of evaluations. Keep in mind that growth data from the next school year (2012-13) *will count* as part of the evaluation process; we want to have two years of data in place, however, before we use growth data as part of the evaluation process, so the first year in which growth data will be part of the process will be 2013-14 (using data from 2012-13 and 2013-14).

Thank you for your leadership on the implementation of evaluations. This work will benefit our educators and our students for many years to come.

***From RIDE:***

**4. RIDE to release October 2011 NECAP results, graduation rates on Thursday (February 9)**

Please see the following message from our Office of Instruction, Assessment, and Curriculum:

The results of the Fall 2011 administration of the New England Common Assessment Program (NECAP) tests for grades 3 through 8 and 11 and the 2011 graduation rates will be made publicly available next week on **Thursday**, (February 9), at 1:30 p.m. *Note:* All summative results are embargoed until this date and time and cannot be shared with the public.

Once the embargo is lifted, all NECAP results information (including RIDE's annual fall NECAP results report) will be available on our website, at:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/Assessment/results.aspx>

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Kevon Tucker-Seeley ([kevon.tucker-seeley@ride.ri.gov](mailto:kevon.tucker-seeley@ride.ri.gov)), or 222-8494).

**5. RIDE accepting Consolidated Resource Plan amendments through February 24**

Please see this message from our Office of Finance:

RIDE is now accepting submissions of amendment requests for currently approved Consolidated Resource Plans (CRPs) *through Friday, February 24*. Preliminary Final Fiscal Year (FY) 2012 allocations to districts have been calculated and loaded into AcceleGrants for the following consolidated programs: Titles I, II, and III and IDEA - Part B and Preschool. Finalization of these allocations is pending RIDE review of district data for Maintenance of Effort (MOE) requirements.

In order to facilitate the amendment process, you can find the following documents posted within the Amendment Section of the AcceleGrant's Document Library:

- FY 11-12 CRP Amendment Guidance including Appendix A - Program Requirements and Appendix B – RIDE Contact Persons;
- FY 11-12 Preliminary Final Allocations by CRP Program;
- Final Student Enrollments Fall 10 – Public & Private (for determining final nonpublic-school equitable shares for Title II (A) and Final Limited English Proficient (LEP) Counts Spring 11 – Public & Private (for determining final nonpublic-school equitable shares under Title III); and
- FY 11-12 Updated Private School Participation Worksheets for the IDEA (Part B & Preschool) programs within the CRP application.

The overall amendment process remains unchanged from last year. A submission of an amendment request requires a system status change to “Superintendent Approved” for a review and final approval by RIDE to occur. The flexibility provision, which can be utilized to avoid the necessity of certain amendment requests, remains in force. As a general rule, any proposed change in the total approved budget amount or significant change in the scope, goals, or intent of an approved program will require an amendment request. If attempting to eliminate a prior approved budget line item in AcceleGrants, do not delete the detail line from the system but instead change the amount of the budget request to zero. Please see the Amendment Guidance and Appendix A for further amendment details. As always, amendment requests must be approved by RIDE before district implementation.

Please note that recently approved school-district FY 2011-2012 (restricted) indirect cost rates have been loaded into AcceleGrants.

Questions regarding the amendment process may be directed to David Luther by telephone, at 222-4652 or at [david.luther@ride.ri.gov](mailto:david.luther@ride.ri.gov). A complete listing of RIDE CRP program and fiscal contacts is also provided within the Amendment Guidance document to provide you with specific contacts for any program and fiscal questions you may have. The amendment guidance is attached to this Field Memo (Amendment Guidance for 2011 – 2012).

Thank you for your continued support.

We will send this message to all business managers.

## **6. Perkins funds may increase this year**

Our Office of Multiple Pathways has received this notice from the U.S. Department of Education regarding Perkins funds:

We want to alert you about revisions to the Fiscal Year 2011 Perkins IV, Title I (Career and Technical Assistance to the States) allocations that the U.S. Department of Education will be issuing soon. As you may know, Congress enacted Public Law (PL) 112-74, the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2012 on December 23, 2011. PL. 112-74

restored approximately \$10.2 million of the \$11.8-million decrease to Fiscal Year 2011 Perkins IV, Title I, funds that were part of PL 112-33, the Continuing Appropriations Act, 2012. As a result, the U.S. Department of Education will soon release revised allocations and supplemental grant. Please note that the revised allocations may mean an increase in funding for *some* but not *all* states under Perkins IV, Title I.

#### **7. Webinar scheduled for Wednesday on interpreting NECAP results**

Please see this notice from our Office of Instruction, Assessment, and Curriculum:

The Comprehensive Assessment System webinar series will continue on **Wednesday** (February 8), from 9:30 - 10:30 a.m., with a webinar on Interpreting NECAP Results. The webinar will include instructions for accessing reports, highlight the features of available reports, and provide a basic framework for analyzing data. In addition, Dr. Kevon Tucker-Seeley will be available to answer participants' NECAP questions. To register, please visit:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/assessment/CAS.aspx>

#### **8. Reminder: Teacher survey on educator evaluations is on line**

Please see this notice from our Office of Educator Quality and Certification:

RIDE has developed an online survey for teachers implementing the Rhode Island Model Educator Evaluation System. The survey will ask teachers questions about their experiences with the Rhode Island Model, as well as about their perspective on evaluation systems in general. We have been collecting feedback from teachers in our two early-adopter districts (Jamestown and Warwick), and this survey will help us capture a broader perspective. Responses to this survey will help us understand how practitioners experience evaluation and how the Rhode Island Model can be improved. The link for the survey is below, and we are asking all superintendents and heads of school to share the survey with their teachers. The deadline for completing the teacher survey is Wednesday, **February 22**:

[https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/RI\\_Model\\_Teacher\\_Survey](https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/RI_Model_Teacher_Survey).

#### **9. RIDE, NEARI, RIFTHP co-hosted a webinar for teachers on educator evaluation**

Please see this notice from our Office of Educator Quality and Certification:

On Wednesday (February 1) representatives from RIDE, NEARI, and RIFTHP led a webinar for teachers on the status of educator evaluation in Rhode Island. The webinar provided teachers with an overview of both the Rhode Island Model Educator Evaluation System and the Rhode Island Innovation Consortium Model Educator Evaluation System, and the webinar discussed how both models were collecting

feedback to inform model-refinement decisions. Teachers were also provided with an opportunity to ask questions about educator evaluation. The webinar PowerPoint and a video file that captures the conversation can be found on our website, at:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/EducatorQuality/EducatorEvaluation/EdEvalAnnounce.aspx>.

**10. *Reminder: Module 3 and Module 4 trainings for evaluators to begin next month***

Please see this notice from our Office of Educator Quality and Certification:

Module 3 for Personnel Evaluating Building Administrators is being offered eight times between March 6 and April 11. Module 4 for Personnel Evaluating Teachers is being offered 28 times between March 12 and April 25. Both trainings will focus on preparing for End-of-Year Conferences. Evaluators can register by going to the eRIDE Workshop calendar, at:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/applications/ridecalendar.aspx>.

**11. *RIDE seeks LEA responses to survey on Instructional Management System – Action Item***

Please see this notice from our Office of Instruction, Assessment and Curriculum:

We are requesting that each LEA complete a short survey indicating the instructional standards used in their LEAs. Survey information will be used to determine standards appearing in the Instructional Management System (IMS). Please fill out the survey or designate someone on your team, such as an assistant superintendent of your curriculum director, to do so on behalf of your LEA.

The survey can be found at:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/LEAstandards>.

The survey will be open from today until Friday, February 17. Thank you for your participation.

For any questions about the survey, please contact Kate Schulz, at [kate.schulz@ride.ri.gov](mailto:kate.schulz@ride.ri.gov) or 222-8489.

**12. *RIDE to offer workshops on mathematics interventions and progress plans***

Please see this notice from our Office of Multiple Pathways:

RIDE will be offering Math Interventions and Progress Plan workshops next month. The Math Interventions and Progress Plan session will guide school teams in the development and implementation of supports and interventions as required by the

Secondary Regulations. The goal of the workshop is to provide participants with an understanding of progress-plan requirements and an opportunity to learn about locally implemented math interventions. Additionally, school teams will have time during the session to develop their progress-plan procedures, to design plans for interventions, or to further develop their plan for math supports for students who are not on track to meet the graduation requirement for math proficiency.

Schools may register for one of three sessions of the progress-plan workshop to be held on March 19 (2 sessions, 8 – 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 – 4 p.m.) and March 20 (1 session, 8 – 11:30 a.m.), at the New England Institute for Technology, East Greenwich campus (1408 Division Rd.). Registration is limited to 50 participants per session on a first-come, first-served basis; preference will be given to school-based teams. School teams must include, at a minimum, principals and math-department chairs and other educators or administrators with responsibility for supporting students reaching math proficiency. Please contact us if your team is larger than 5 members. Others will be admitted to sessions if space allows.

Please send questions that you have about the progress-plan or testing-requirement regulations to [lauren.mccarthy@ride.ri.gov](mailto:lauren.mccarthy@ride.ri.gov), so that we can address your questions at the workshop. Participants will receive further information to better prepare them to get the most out of this workshop. Registration and additional workshop details are available through the RIDE calendar for March 2012:

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/applications/ridecalendar.aspx>

Please contact Lauren McCarthy ([lauren.mccarthy@ride.ri.gov](mailto:lauren.mccarthy@ride.ri.gov) or 222-8463) if you have questions about the workshops.

***RIDE will post this field memo on Tuesday, at:***

<http://www.ride.ri.gov/Commissioner/fieldmemos/default.aspx>